

Fordingbridge Rural District Council
Sanitary Authority.

ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE

YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31st, 1895,

BY THE

Medical Officer of Health

TO THE

FORDINGBRIDGE UNION.

FORDINGBRIDGE :

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DURING the year ending December 31st, 1895, there have been registered :—

178 Births (88 male, 90 female). This shows a total of 4 more than last year, and contrary to the usual rule in this district, the females are in excess of the males.

100 Deaths from all causes, which is equal to 16·0 per 1000 of the population, which numbers 6,236 souls. This number of deaths is 5 above the total for 1894, and 6 above that for 1893, so that the death-rate, and consequently the health of the District, does not vary much from year to year. 62 deaths occurred in the first half of the year, and 38 in the second half; doubtless the great difference in the two halves of the year was caused by the extremely severe and long continued winter, and the very warm and long continued summer.

COMMENTS ON THE DEATH-RATE.

Of the **100 Deaths**, 48 were males, 52 females. **28** were *70 years or over* that age (12 males, 16 females), **10** being *80 years or over* (2 males, 8 females), one female being 93 years old. The 28 over 70 years of age averaged 78·1 years each, and the 12 males averaged 76·1 years, the 16 females 79·6 years each.

15 were *between 60 and 70 years* of age (2 males, 13 females).

The mortality *below 1 year* of age amounted to **21** (14 males, 7 females), 7 more than last year. This rise in the infant mortality is to a great extent due to the birth of a number of premature or weakly infants, 5 of them lived less than 3 days. We thus see that **49** of the total number of deaths were at the two extremes of life; and finally **64** of the 100 deaths, occurred below 1 year and above 60, only leaving **36** to be distributed over the intervening 59 years. **8** of the 100 deaths were of a violent or sudden nature, necessitating an inquest, so that making allowance for these, I consider the health of the District, as shown by the death-rate, to be as good as usual.

ZYMOTIC DISEASES INCLUDED IN TABLE B.

Under this heading, we have to record 31 cases of *Scarlet Fever*, 6 cases of *Diphtheria*, 2 cases of *Typhoid Fever*, 1 case of *Puerperal Fever*, and 10 cases of *Erysipelas*.

Scarlet Fever—8 cases below, and 23 above 5 years of age are reported.

Five of these cases resulted from a child who had had the disease in one of the Hospitals of the Metropolitan Asylums' Board, being sent down to Breamore to convalesce at a friend's house. Her mother and sister, who accompanied her, showed the disease at the end of 10 days, and three of the inmates of the house also; some of the cases were of a very severe type. On writing to the Medical Superintendent of the Metropolitan Asylums' Board Hospital, I heard that all possible precautions had been taken and that no blame was attachable to them.

There was a separate outbreak at Sandleheath, in some houses close together, probably the remains of an outbreak there in 1894.

One of the men of the Middlesex Regiment, present at the New Forest Autumn Manœuvres at Godshill Camp, developed the disease, and was at once removed to the Military Hospital at Netley. A further outbreak (4 children) occurred in a cottage not far from where his tent was pitched; and it is possible and probable that all the cases resulted from some camp followers who were encamped between the cottage and the tent, and of whom there were great numbers during the manœuvre week. The other cases were sporadic and single, or 2 or 3 in a family. Most of the cases were very slight and none were fatal.

Diphtheria—6 cases are reported, 2 below, 4 above 5 years of age, sporadic and mild cases. Two houses had 2 cases in each. No fatalities, and no spreading of the disease occurred.

Typhoid Fever—2 cases above 5 years of age occurred, 1 case was that of a Volunteer, who visited Aldershot for Manœuvres—it was very mild, and went on well. The other case was that of a gentleman who came from Barnsley in Yorkshire, where the disease was rife, with it on him, and who died of the disease. I inspected the premises where he died, and made some suggestions for the improvement of their sanitation.

Puerperal Fever—1 case, severe, but the termination was favourable.

Erysipelas—11 cases, 1 below, 10 above 5 years of age, all but one of the so-called idiopathic variety. Although in one instance the mother infected her sucking infant, or vice versa. The other case occurred after severe operation for Cancer of the Breast, which proved fatal, in the Cottage Home. By my directions the room was thoroughly cleansed, re-papered, and painted, etc., before it was again used. No cases have occurred since.

ZYMOTIC DISEASES NOT INCLUDED IN TABLE B.

Measles—12 cases below, 9 above 5 years of age are reported, but this is no clue as to the extent of the disease, as it raged at Breamore and Hale to such an extent that the schools had to be closed for a month. The disease broke out so suddenly, and was so general at Breamore, that I at once closed the school, and it was extraordinary how soon the epidemic disappeared. One case, complicated with Pneumonia, in a young child, proved fatal. It is the exception, not the rule, for cases of Measles to come to the Doctor's notice, unless any complication arises.

German Measles or *Rötheln*—5 cases, 4 above, 1 below 5 years of age, came under notice, but there was a wide-spread epidemic.

Influenza—100 cases, 9 below, 91 above 5 years of age are reported amongst Paupers. The disease was very prevalent, in a very severe form, in March, after the hard weather broke up, especially at Breamore. 9 fatal cases occurred, 1 below, 8 above 5 years of age, all more or less complicated with lung trouble. The visitation was short but sharp.

Other or *Doubtful Fevers*—Under this head are included cases of Febricula, Varicella, &c., and 33 cases are reported, 1 below, and 32 above 5 years of age—all favourable.

OTHER DISEASES.

Diarrhœa and Dysentery—46 cases are reported amongst Pauper Patients, 11 below, 35 above 5 years of age. This shows an increase of only 4 on the number for 1894, and considering the very great heat of the summer of 1895, and its long continuance as compared with the coolness of 1894, it is very gratifying to note the high standard of health in this respect. 3 deaths occurred from the disease, 1 above, 2 below 5 years of age.

Bronchial and Respiratory Disorders—Under this head are included *Phthisis*, *Pleurisy*, *Pneumonia*, *Asthma*, *Bronchitis*, and *Catarrh*, and amongst Pauper Patients, 84 cases below, and 257 above 5 years of age are recorded. This total is very nearly indeed the same as last year. 8 deaths from *Phthisis* are recorded, the same number as last year, 3 below, 5 above 5 years of age. 1 case is returned as general *Tuberculosis*, 2 as *Tubercular Meningitis*, 1 as *Tubercular Laryngitis*, and 4 as *Phthisis Pulmonalis*.

13 deaths from *Bronchitis*, *Pneumonia* and *Broncho-Pneumonia*, are reported, 7 below, 6 above 5 years of age. If we add the 9 fatal cases of *Influenza*, complicated with lung trouble, it brings the total up to 22; that is 3 more than in 1894, so that we see the visitation of *Influenza* was more fatal in 1895 than in 1894. 5 of the fatal cases were due to *Broncho-Pneumonia*, 2 to *Acute Bronchitis*, 2 to *Chronic Bronchitis*, 2 complicated with heart troubles, 1 pure *Pneumonia*, and 1 complicated with *Rickets*.

Hence we see that the total death-rate from *Phthisis* and all *Respiratory Disorders* is 30, as compared with 27 for the year 1894.

Heart Disease—13 deaths occurred, attributable to *Heart Disease* and *Cardiac Complications*—4 were due to *Aortic Disease*, 2 of them being very sudden, 5 were due to *Mitral Disease*, 2 to *Failure of the Heart's Action* after operation for *Strangulated Hernia* in one case, and *Cancer of the Breast* in the other, and 2 to *Syncope*, one ending a case of *Senile Sclerosis of the Cord*. This total is a decrease of 6 on the total for 1894.

New Growths—Under this head we have recorded 7 deaths, 5 due to true *Cancer*, 2 of the *Breast*, 1 of the *Bowel*, 1 of *Abdomen* (*Abdominal Tumour*), and 1 in which the situation is not specified; in another case *Uterine Fibroid* seems to have hastened the end in an old patient, and in another *Naso Pharyngeal Adenoids* shortened the life of a weakly infant by preventing its sucking.

7 Deaths from *Injury* are recorded, viz. :—2 *Fatal Burns*, occurring in one conflagration, 1 from *Drowning*, 1 *Broken Neck* from a fall, 1 *Suicide* by cut throat, 1 *Suffocation* by falling on the face in an *Epileptic Fit*, and 1 *Irreducible Hernia*, complicated by *Gangrene of the Scrotum*, 5 cases of death after *Premature Birth*, 1 complicated by *Malpresentation*, occurred, and 2 fatal cases of *Spina Bifida* and *Hydrocephalus*.

10 Deaths from *Cerebral Paralysis* are recorded, 1 from *Ascending Spinal Paralysis*, 1 of *Fatal Epileptic Seizure*, 1 of *Infantile Convulsions*, 1 of *Congenital Syphilis*, 1 of *Pelvic Peritonitis*, 1 of *Uræmia* after Retention of Urine, and 2 of *Atrophy of the Liver*.

5 deaths occurred in the Fordingbridge Union Workhouse, and 3 in the Fordingbridge Cottage Home.

The total number of cases of Sickness reported amongst Paupers is 1,440 in the Out-door Department, and 50 in the Workhouse. The out-door total is 63 less than that for 1894.

GENERAL SANITARY CONDITION OF THE DISTRICT.

During the year 1895, the work under the Public Health Act has gone on continuously, and in most cases most satisfactorily. All parts of the District have been visited and inspected by myself and the Inspector of Nuisances, and any insanitary conditions noted and investigated. About the usual number of houses have been visited and inspected, and any improvements in their sanitation which appeared necessary, have been suggested, and in most cases carried out. In all cases in which the Inspector of Nuisances has been in any difficulty, I have assisted him with my advice and special report, if necessary.

In all cases of Scarlet Fever, the routine disinfection, &c., before the children are allowed to return to school, has been carried out; in cases where other members of the family are working amongst other people, I have insisted on their lodging elsewhere during the six weeks quarantine, or else on their exclusion from work for that time. Although we have not been able to actually stamp out the disease, at any time during the year, yet I think one can see the result of the routine isolation and disinfection which is carried out, in the attenuated form of the virus, as shown by the very great mildness of the attacks.

School premises, as usual, have been periodically inspected and reported on. There has been little or no trouble under this head during the past year.

I specially inspected and reported on some houses at Martin, at the request of the Rural District Council, and suggested repairs, which were, to some extent, carried out.

I also, together with the Inspector of Nuisances, thoroughly investigated the water supply to Back Street and the West End, at the request of the Rural District Council, and sent in a full and exhaustive

report on the matter, with an account of the quality of the water after analysis. Numerous other specimens of drinking water have been examined and reported on.

I am pleased to be able to report, that the Home Office, Burials Acts Department, have at length acted on my twice repeated report on the Burial Grounds of Fordingbridge, and as a result, Dr. Hoffman, one of their Inspectors, visited the Town in October, and reported on the existing state of affairs. His report thoroughly bore out all that I had said, and, as a consequence, notice was received from the Home Office for the closure of all grounds, except the Roman Catholic Ground, and certain specified exceptions in each ground, on and after October 31st, 1896. The Burial Question, is now, therefore, the chief topic of interest, and I hope to be able to report next year, that the matter is satisfactorily settled.

There is still no system of Sewage or Refuse Collection, which I have before pointed out as most necessary in the case of those houses which have no means of disposing of such refuse, consequently the contamination of streams and watercourses still goes on, together with the very unhealthy practice of accumulating dust and ash heaps, &c., in back yards.

The condition of the cottages is gradually being improved, and wherever practicable, I condemn an insanitary house when the former inhabitant dies or moves from it, so as to prevent a fresh tenant taking on the premises; this plan of action is necessitated by the very great scarcity of cottage accommodation in the Union, as indiscriminate condemnation of houses would only remedy one nuisance by causing another and a worse one, in many cases, viz. :—that of overcrowding.

There has been no necessity for any special report to the Local Government Board, on the outbreak of any epidemic, or on any other subject during the year.

I append a summary of the work performed by the Inspector of Nuisances during the year 1895, and should wish to add that his activity, promptitude and caution, are in my opinion, all that could be wished. As before stated, in any case of doubt or difficulty, he has sought my advice before taking action, and has acted on such advice. No case has been brought before the Magistrates' Bench during the year.

REPORT OF INSPECTOR OF NUISANCES FOR THE
YEAR 1895.

Schools Inspected	7	Houses Disinfected ..	25
Cottages Inspected	130	Privies and w.c.'s repaired ..	9
Lodging Houses Inspected	2	Samples of water analysed	1
Slaughter Houses Inspected	4	Compensation for destruc-	
Bakehouses Inspected ..	8	tion of bedding ..	1
Filthy Houses Cleansed ..	4	Nuisances reported or de-	
Overcrowding Abated ..	6	tected	29
Houses placed in habitable		Nuisances abated	29
repair	10	Notices served	16
Improvement in Privy		Houses demolished, unfit for	
accommodation ..	5	habitation, and danger-	
Houses closed	2	ous to health	3

A great majority of Nuisances reported above were filthy pigsties, &c. The small number of notices served, is mainly owing to the suggestion made by the Rural District Council to the Inspector of Nuisances, that, in most cases, unless absolutely necessary, he (the Inspector) should refrain from serving notices, and try, by persuasion, to get the nuisances, &c., abated.

ARTHUR ALEXANDER,
Inspector of Nuisances.

At the time of writing this report, I have pleasure in stating that the Union is free from epidemic disease, except an indefinite form of Influenza, and that for the time of year, the death-rate is exceptionally low.

HERBERT V. RAKE,

*Medical Officer of Health to the Rural District Council
of the Fordingbridge Union.*



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